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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification, starting at line 19 of page 25 to line 5 of page 26 as follows:

Working Examples 1 to 5 and 8 in Fig. 4 are examples in which the optical fiber preform 4 was manufactured by adjusting the level of pressure reduction within the glass pipe 1 so as to pre-elongate the glass rod 2 before the glass pipe 1 and the glass rod 2 are formed into a single unit (see Fig. 2), and of Working Examples 1 to 5 and 8, in Working Examples 1 to 5, the glass pipe 1 has a relatively small outer diameter $D0$, whereas in Working ~~Examples 6 to~~ Example 8, the glass pipe 1 has a relatively large outer diameter $D0$.

Furthermore, Working Examples ~~9 to 12 and~~ 12 and 14 in Fig. 5 are examples in which the optical fiber preform 4 was manufactured by adjusting the pressure reduction levels within the glass pipe 1 so as to pre-elongate the glass rod 2 before the glass pipe 1 and the glass rod 2 are formed into a single unit, and of Working Examples ~~9 to 12 and~~ 12 and 14, in Working ~~Examples 9 to Example 12~~, the outer diameter $D0$ of the glass pipe 1 is relatively small, whereas in Working ~~Examples 13 and~~ Example 14, the outer diameter $D0$ of the glass pipe 1 is relatively large.

Please amend the paragraph spanning pages 26 to 27 as follows:

Fig. 8 is a diagram based on Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, in which the value of $L1/(L1 + L2)$ is plotted along the horizontal axis, and the number of bubbles formed in the optical fiber preform (black squares) and the amount of core eccentricity of the optical fiber (white triangles) are plotted along the vertical axis. From Fig. 8, it can be seen that if the value of $L1/(L1 + L2)$ is at least 0.1 and not more than 0.8, then the formation of bubbles and core eccentricity are both prevented. ~~This trend is the same even when the outer diameter $D0$ of the glass pipe 1 is large, as in Working Examples 6 and 7, for example, and it was found that the formation of bubbles and core eccentricity were reliably prevented even when the glass pipe 1 had a large diameter (large $D0$) or was thick walled (small $d0/D0$).~~

Please amend the first paragraph on page 28 as follows:

The grasping device, which has been omitted from the drawings, grasps the upper ends of the glass pipe 1 and the glass pipe 2 and is configured such that it can move the glass

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pipe 1 and the glass rod 2 in a downward direction, ~~but the moving directions can be set to feed rates for the glass pipe 1 and the glass rod 2 (feeding speed toward the heater 3) that differ from one another.~~ The second embodiment is different from the first embodiment in that the feed rate of the glass rod 2 is set faster than the feed rate of the glass pipe 1.